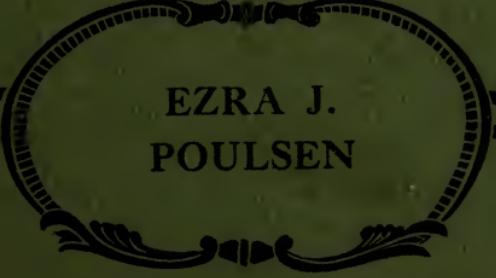


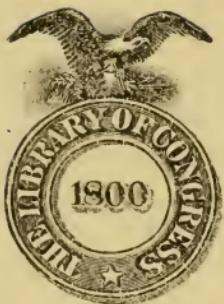
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Songs for *the Toilers*



EZRA J.
POULSEN



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SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

By
EZRA J. POULSEN



1922

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TO THE WORKERS AND FIGHTERS
OF AMERICA, THIS LITTLE COLLEC-
TION OF VERSE IS NOW AND FOREVER
DEDICATED.

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The Pioneers

COME, let me tell you the wonderful story,
Fraught with pictures of hardship and
daring,
Of the men and the women of iron
Whose deeds are gilded with glory;
How they conquered the majestic Westland
By the strength of their brawn and their brain,
Crossing the plains, the mountains, and turbulent
rivers,
A fearless and happy band.

They were the vanguard of progress;
They laid the foundations of state;
There was a strength in the plan of their
building
That conquered the desert and opened the moun-
tain recess.
Forth from the marts of civilization,
They came with a sturdy purpose;
For the tinsel of luxury they cared not;
They sought for the gold of creation.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

It was not a mere comfort they wanted,
They thought for the ages unborn,
For the children whose children would love them ;
So they toiled on, they fought on undaunted.
They were the heroes titanic
Whom God chose to lead the way
Into the Canaan that waited,
Into the Westland gigantic.

Oh, the stalwart, immutable pioneers,
Such a race as could blazen the trail ;
In the midst of the prairie their campfires
Gleamed far, lighting their hopes, and staying
their fears.

Slowly, like caravans crawling,
Their ox-trains followed the path of the sunset,
Meandered the courses of rivers, and entered the
canyon defiles,
Nor stopped they for mountain barriers.

Theirs was a heritage of conquest,
Their fathers before them had wrought
With true strength on the anvil of destiny ;
And the son, like the sire, loved labor, not rest ;
In their veins flowed the blood of the Saxon, the
Norman, and Teuton,

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

And power there was in the blending.
They came from the choice ranks of the ages;
They were combined of the Viking, the Cavalier,
and Puritan.

They came from the green fields of Britain,
And from far Scandinavia's coasts,
Or from the green vales of New England,
Where the sons of the Mayflower live;
Or, mayhap, they came from the Southland,
The land of the flowers and dew.
They came to the call of the onward,
Into the unknown land.

Stalwart and bronzed, they hastened on,
With rifle and axe to open the way;
And joined with others who sought the trail;
Into the wilds ahead of them went their song.
At the rude tasks of the pioneer they wavered
not,
But battled their way thru forest, and torrent,
and morass,
Making their path as they went, or following
the dim trail of others who had passed.
In their hearts beat the hope of finding the haven
they sought.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Cheerful, and happy, and helpful to others,
They lived near to Nature's God.
Joys and sorrows alike they shared.
Proving that all men are brothers;
And oft in the campfire's ruddy glow,
Where fathers, and mothers, and children were
gathered,
They sang songs of gladness, and regaled the
hours
With sagas of hardship and daring.

And when cold handed Death took his toll,
Striking down a face that was loved,
In mutual sorrow they laid away the departed,
And struggled to calm the stormy stress of the
soul.
A last lingering look at the shallow grave,
Then with aching hearts they resumed the
desolate trail.
Firm in their hearts was the faith that God
would prevail,
And receive into his paradise the life that he
gave.

Into the virgin valleys, a race of conquerors they
came;
On their swarthy faces beamed the light of the
rising sun;

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

By their presence the spell of the primitive was
vanquished,
And unto the wilderness they gave a name.
Then lo, from the dormant, untrampled area
The work of their hands caused cities to rise,
While fields bloomed and ripened under the hus-
bandman's care,
And cattle roved in sweet content across the lea.

They fought and treated with redmen
For a share of the ancient habitat,
Till the painted warrior is needed no more,
And his stoic brethren have turned from the way
that had been
The stamp of their savagery thru ages gone by.
Thus the reign of the war-axe and arrow has
vanished,
And the reaper and plow have conquered the
land
Where the riches of Utopia lie.

Such is the story of the pioneers,
They who braved the dangers of venturing
Into the unknown land that waited,
They who led the way mid sorrows and tears.
To you and me they left the inheritance;
We profit by their spirit and prowess;

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Let us corrupt not the treasures they left us,
But build firm, and be true; they gave us the
chance.

O, you sons of the noble blood,
Forget not the strength of your fathers
Who conquered the land and the sea,
They of the South, and the East, and the North
Who dared the mountain and flood.
It was they who followed the sinking sun
Far into the land of gold,
It was they who founded a commonwealth
That the sons of their sons might come.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

The Reapers

THIS is the song that the reapers sing
When the yellow sheaves they're piling,
When the golden plumes of autumn gleam,
And the harvest moon is smiling.

Good cheer, Good cheer
The harvest is here,
And merrily do we reap.
Some for the sons of Tubal Cain,
Some for the sons of Thor,
Some for the sturdy toilers at home,
And a little more to keep
Our soldier boy over the sea.

There's a buoyant note in the reaper's song
As it wings its way on the breeze;
There's a lofty hope in the singer's heart
That a year and a day might appease
The angry Moloch,
Consuming the sons of men.

Good cheer, good cheer,
The harvest is here,

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

So the reapers continue to sing,
As they garner the harvest from winter's blast
That pours down from the hoary old north.
And they think of the fragrant, blossoming
spring.

But list a while to the maiden's song,

As she plies her strength to the bending sheaves.
Her maiden form moves pliant and strong
'Mid the whispering autumn leaves.

My soldier boy is over the sea,
And the heart of my heart is he,
Over the blue and boisterous sea;
O, send him hurrying back to me,
But not till all his brave duty is done,
Not till the battle of right is won.

Such is the song of the harvesters
When the golden grain they're piling;
They greet with joy the beck'ning years
When the harvest moon is smiling.

Come, join the song,
And march along
With the army that goes out to reap;
For life is the work of the Master of all,
And joy is the measure of man.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Good cheer, good cheer,
The harvest is here,
And merrily do we reap.
Some for the sons of Tubal Cain,
Some for the sons of Thor,
Some for the patient toilers at home,
And more
For our soldier boy over the sea.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

The Wayfarer

HE LONGS for a breath of the fragrant air
That kisses his native hills,
And deep in his pent up heart there lies
An eager longing for the day that wills
His return to the happy land.

Far on the wings of the years he has sped,
In quest of dame Future's best treasure;
Yet naught that the wide earth has offered to him
Seems half so sweet, or gives the full measure
Of joy that the old home affords.

The maple tree and the blossoming rose
Are beckoning from over the gilded wall of his
dreams,
And the oaken door of memory stands ajar
To reveal the endeared cot, and the sainted face
 that beams
The ecstasy of a mother's love.

Back again come the happy scenes of childhood,
Tumbling along the secluded aisles of the past.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

The orchards, and meadows, and fields of ripening grain
Glow again in fancy, and the last
Thot of the weary day is gone.

A quick bridge is thrown across Time's widening gulf,
And he passes over to join in the revelries of old,
And joy untold is found in those haunts,
From which youth, ever restless and bold,
Is all too eager to depart.

Ambitions once achieved seem but baubles,
And wearily the heart turns away from them
Feeling that they are but passing shadows
That follow in the wake of the efforts which stem
The tides of the years.

And above the din of toil or battle sounds the call
To hasten back where old associations wait
To be renewed, with all their bliss;
And visions come of kinsmen standing at the gate
To welcome home the prodigal.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Thus the wayfarer on life's journey,
Tho laden with the gifts of auspicious fortune,
Would give all for a glimpse of his native hearth ;
And longingly he waits for the day opportune
That will start him on the road back home.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Through the Veil

ON THE other side of the veil I see
The marching regiments that used to be;
They are resting now in their mail of white—
Those heroes of righteous might.
There in the fields of Elysium
Where the woes of war shall never come,
They are watching the trend of the way,
And are thinking of home today.

Those rugged men who came not back
Over the ocean's surging track,
Are thinking of the dear home land
Beyond the gray sea sand;
And the hope in their hearts is rising high
That the living will cherish the ones who die;
And remember the cause of the slain
That death to them be not in vain.

They went thru the midnight of battle's hell;
True to trust and tryst, face to foe they fell;
And their going was like a sigh in the night;

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Thru the dark veil of death they went into a
land of light.

The unfinished task they left behind,
Like a magic wand to sustain and bind
The hearts of heroes that proudly beat,
And never know the measure of defeat.

On the other side of the veil I see
The marching regiments that used to be;
They are living now in paradise —
They who made the sacrifice.
In their sunlit land of rest
They contemplate the days they gave their best;
And pray before the Throne of Grace
That we will falter not in manhood's race.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Pal O' Mine

DO YOU know the days are brighter,
Pal o' mine,
For the charm of having met with you?
Do you know my heart is lighter,
For the thot that you were true?

It's a long and weary way we've traveled,
Pal o' mine,
But we've reached the lonely parting in the road,
Where you pass on to God's white throne,
While I remain to trod the stony path alone.

In the battle's din, undaunted,
You were true to God's ideal.
Not another manly trait was wanted,
Pal o' mine,
To make your life a shining light to men.
And tho you join the ranks of death,
Pal o' mine,
Yet it's not forgotten you will be;
But your name will live in glory
In the annals of the free.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

In Summer Time on Sagar's Hills

IN SUMMER time on Sagar's hills,
White cloud ships sail the sky;
The sun's a yellow rolling sheen
That scatters gold across the green,
And life is all a glad desire
To feel the heart of nature thrill,—
Thrill with music from the breeze,
Wafting thru the aspen trees
Where gentle zyphers kiss the laughing rill.

Across the rolling Sagar's hills
Wild mountain flowers bloom;
White lilies greet the rosy dawn,
And sleep with evening's gloom.
O'er sunny hill and shady dell
The wily coyote's cry resounds,
Over the hills the echo bounds,
To the valley's depths below.

In summer time on Sagar's hills
Dame Nature's reign is o'er;
The plowman's song at evening rings—

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

It's a happy song he sings,
As o'er the damp and fragrant sod he plods,
With tired limbs but happy heart,
Toward his cabin home.

O, summer time on Sagar's hills,
'Tis just the time and place ;
I feel the breath of freedom there,
The freedom of my western land.
O, Sagar's hills in summer time,—
In hazy Indian summer time,—
I feel the breath of freedom there,
In every draught of ozone atmosphere.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Star of the Silvery Night

STAR of the silvery night,
Gleaming your beacon light ;
Far o'er the silence,
Twinkle your merry smile ;
Be thou a guide the while
Unto my soul.

Star of the silvery night,
Light winged and golden bright,
Calm and serene,
Where is the path you go ?
How can you twinkle so
In the great void ?

Star of the dreaming time,
What longed for goal is thine
In yonder sky ?
Your light, tho' true, yet fades
Oft into outer shades
Among millions more.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Yet you shine bravely on,
Ah, star, you little one,
How patient you are!
Oft in this world of men
My dearest wish has been
Crushed in the struggle.

Star of the silvery night,
Yours is the welcome light
That bids me to rise.
If you can shine so true
Amid the host that's hiding you,
I too will rise again,
And struggle in the realm of men.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Mother

MY DEAREST joy is the memory of you
Whose faith in me never failed,
My greatest love is my love for you
Whose name shall ne'er be assailed.
Your angel face, thro the years that fly,
Is the guide that beckons me on;
Though stealing across my heart like a sigh,
Is the thot that today you are gone.

Back there in the dear old home
I learned life's best lessons from you;
And tho the wide world I may roam,
To your love I must be true.
You cherished the glimmer of good in me
When others thot it had died;
By the light of your beautiful life I see,
And for you, dear mother, I've tried.

Faith whispers that you wait for me
At the other end of the trail,
And I feel the warmth of your love for me,
Which strengthens my feet, lest I fail.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Most priceless of precious gifts you are,
I have learned, as I pass down the years.
I am trying to be what you're hoping for,
Dear mother, remember no fears.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

The Seer

LO, HERE he comes with dauntless tread,
Forth from the ranks of men.
His brow is crowned with laurels won
Down in the marts of toil;
And like the snowy mountain top,
His strength is towering high;
For he has scaled the heights of life,
And reached, at last, the place
Where right and might are one.

He is the seer whose vision clear
Leads on, and on to God;
And people say, "Let's hear him speak,
For he points out the way of life eternal."
And thus he rules with gentle mien,
And wields with firmness true,
The scepter of God's priesthood here on earth.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Over the Hills

OVER the hills where the road leads,
A joy is waiting for you—
Waiting aglow where the sun shines
Forth from the glimmering blue.
You'll find it there in the evening,
If you're not afraid of the climb ;
Just stick to the place where the road leads
Over the hills of time.

Over the hills with a steady tread ;
It's a long, long way to go ;
But a buoyant heart will take you there,
While the tender zephyrs blow.
And your truest wish is lingering
Close by a sea of gold,
To carry you on to the sun gates
Across the fairy world.

Yes, the grade is steep where the road leads
Up many a slope of the hills ;
And dangers galore will besiege you,
If you falter or grow afraid.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Be strong, and staunch, and brave, lad ;
And the treasures of life are thine ;
And your journey will be a happy one
Over the hills of time.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Evening

C EASE, song of the hammer and forge,
The sun is aslant in the drowsy west;
And Evening is calling the worker home
To his haven of love,—and rest.

Come sturdy son of the soil,
It is time to rest, while the robin sings ;
Stop your mowing, and haste to your cot in the
dell,
And wait for the peace that the night wind
brings.

And you of the office crowd,
Don't labor the long night thru,
Come out of your den, come out and be free,
The mocking bird's calling for you.

Workers, you're given the day of your strength,
Of the best of your muscle and brain.
Come away from your toil and tarry awhile,
On the morrow you'll take up the strain.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Just linger an hour in evening's calm,
And breath your thanks for the day;
You can never fail if you do your best,
For God watches over the way.

Cease, song of the hammer and forge;
Rest, weary makers of cheer;
Sing, feathered songsters of meadow and hill,
The evening vacation is here.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Maid of My Heart

LITTLE maid of my heart,
When the roses bloom,
I think of the rose on your cheek ;
And my soul soars out in infinite tune
With yours that awaits somewhere,
My coming thru the long night of gloom.

Little maid, when we parted
Our love was true ;
It is true as eternity still ;
But, Oh, my beautiful, beautiful one,
My heart is yearning for you
In the dull, dead void that remains,
I am longing, yes, longing for you.

Little maid of my heart,
We twain are one
Thru love's refining fire ;
And tho you've travelled so far away,
Up near the Lord's white throne,
I still am hoping, hoping, dear,
To come to you when the roses bloom.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Autumn

HE WRITES his name with master hand
Along the rugged mountain steeps;
In colors gold, and brown, and red,
Upon the face of earth he leaps,
And sports with passing Summer where
She lingers in the dell—
Lingers just to wait for him,
Whose kiss she loves so well.

With rapture he caresses her
Until her cheeks turn red;
And then her garments green she changes,
And shyly she consents to wed.
So the bold rover, Autumn, has his way,
When bounding over mount and mead he comes,
Decked in his gorgeous color scheme,
Along the woodlands rim he runs.

Across the sea and land he paints bright rain-
bow hues
To please his winsome bride,
And dances in the sunshine glimmer

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

In wild ecstasy and pride.
He is a happy, saucy wight,
A special favorite of us all,
And we can't help but like his glowing colors,
The gold, and red, and brown of boisterous Fall.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Summer Melodies

O, MELODIES simple and sweet,
Tinkling chimes blown by the winds
From the heart of bright summers' retreat.
Fresh from the full throated birds, and the bees,
Babbling brooks and murmuring trees,
Linger, O songs of mid-summer.

O, melodies rippling clear,
Strewn thru the vales and sunny dales
Full laden with memories dear,
Laden with thots from the past's golden hours,
Mixed with the dew and the fragrance of
flowers,
Stay ever, sweet songs of mid-summer.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

By the Lake

O, THE joy of quiet retreat
By the margin of the lake,
Dainty ripples at your feet,
Golden cloud banks in the sky,
Make the tired thots retreat,
While on the pleasant sands you lie.

And the heart is lighter there,
Glad and wild
And free from care.
There's a beauty sweet, serene,
A charm from God's own hand
That only by the laughing lake is seen.

Come, listen while the black-bird sings,
And hear the chattering jay,
And watch the skyline kiss the hills
All thru the happy day.
There's rest and music by the lake;
Stern toiler, stop awhile, partake.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Christmas Time

O THE withering chills
Creep over the hills
From the north far, far away,
And the wild winds blow
The frolicsome snow
From Santa Clause land today.
The children are happy and wonder-eyed,
Their faces aglow in the dancing light,
What a merry group by the fire-side!
Old jolly Kris Kringle is coming tonight.

And the melodies chime
In rhythmic time
The spirit of the Yule-tide cheer,
As the bells sing far
Of the luminous star
And the coming of the Christ-child here.
The trembling notes peal the old refrain
Over the land, in all the earth;
And waiting angels catch the strain
To weave in their song of the Master's birth.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

The glad measures of love
Strewn down from above
This Christmas time fraught with joys,
Bring peace to the heart;
Good spirits impart
To the frolicsome girls and boys.
There's a happy reunion in all the land
On this day of all days of the year;
Christ's spirit meets with each happy band
That seeks to keep Christmas time cheer.

O, let the wild winds blow
The tumbling snow,
While our Christmas hymns are sung.
With joy, O Lord, this happy time
We thank thee for the gift divine
By which eternal life was won.
Our grateful thanks this Christmas day
We render for thy blessings free,
And follow him who led the way
For this, our happy jubilee.



SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Consolation

ARE THERE days that seem to be
So dull and drear 'tis hard to see
A bit of joy about you?
And do you sometimes feel that life
Is just a round of toil and strife,
Without a single blessing?

You might think the hours lag,
And every effort helps to drag
You farther from your goal;
But don't give up and stop too soon,
For surely as the flowers bloom,
You can be triumphant.

When you think you're down and out,
Just stir yourself and be about
The task that seems impending.
And it will follow, just as day the night,
You'll find you are a man of might
If you but stop your worrying.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

You'll find it best to live to do,
To love, and give, and surely you
Can satisfy your longings.
Remember that life's treasures lie
Along the road of I-will-try,
Where happy work folks travel.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

You Are the One

YOU ARE the one
That the world awaits
For tomorrow's great building task;
You are the one
In whom destiny stakes her chance to be true,
And to lead aright
To the goal afar
Where Time's swift steps are leading.

You are the one
Whose brain and brawn must build
Thru the future days,
That the mills may turn,
And the lights may burn,
Along civilization's ways.
You are the one to do and dare,
And strive at the morrow's bidding.

You are the one
Whose courage true
Will win in the long, long fight
To keep the bark of truth afloat

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Over the shoals of doubt to right;
And if you will build with a steady hand,
Each day, as the days go by,
You'll learn the meaning of happiness,
Thru all the years that are coming.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Passing of the Days

I LOVE to watch the days go by,
As down the road of life they fly;
The rustle of their silken wings
Gives joy like that which music brings,
And each is laden with a song
That helps to cheer the sad along.
And their treasures they impart,
Little sonnets of the heart,
Or the fragrant nectar of the flowers.
Silver dropped and sun-kissed showers.

Each passing day is sure to be
A rarest gem for you and me,
If we will only live and glean
The truth upon its flashing sheen.
It whispers life and gladness here;
It bears a message of good cheer
To all who seek for love and light,
And tread upon the path of right.
Yes, of joy it freely gives,
And whispers to the soul that lives
Above the tumult and the grime,
That life is just as limitless as time.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

He who rises in the morn,
And thinks his life of beauty shorn,
Can never see the good that is,
And happiness will not be his.
To him the day is full of gloom,
And even tho the roses bloom
He sees them not,
For in his heart the light is not.

And thus the winged days go past,
Ever moving, gliding fast
Toward the sun encircled land
Where the heights of wisdom stand.
But only they with virtue's ways
Learn to love the flying days,
And feel that life is good and true,
Tho filled with joy and sorrow, too.
Yes, the days bring cloudy weather,
Clods and stones, as well as treasure;
But there's strength in sifting out
Gems that lie in waste about;
And the best are his who works;
The lusterless are for the shirks.

I love to watch the days go by,
As down the road of life they fly;

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Fond memories follow in their wake,
And little pools of quiet make
That linger by life's rushing stream,
And give us mortals time to dream.

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

Ted

TED is just a four-year-old
With sunburned cheeks and hair of gold.
A streak of sunshine flitting o'er
The homespun carpet on the floor.
Two ruby lips and azure eyes
Are his, to rival summer skies,
Or scatter kisses steeped in rose's bloom.

In the kitchen with his toys,
He is playing. What a noise !
And when the sunset's lambent beams
Steal quietly thru the window seams,
Young Ted's alert. With eager tread
He toddles down the garden bed ;
And in the basking loam,
He plays and waits, — alone —
Plays and waits, for daddy's coming home.

Oh, the joy of meeting Ted,
With sunny smile and tousled head.
He holds the hearstrings of the home,
And makes the day a joy that seems

SONGS FOR THE TOILERS

To border on a fairyland of dreams.
He wants to be a man some day;
And oft times when he's hard at play,
He talks about the things he'll do
When he is grown like me and you.

So hopeful youth
Must ever hasten on to manhood's power,
Leaving all the pastures green
To tread the highway's scorching sheen,
For there's greater joy in toil than wanton ease.
May God's protection day by day
Keep those little feet from going astray
From paths of love, and right, and liberty.

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